

some; for, if along with such meat, vegetables rich in potash, be eaten, the conditions are present which determine the reproduction during digestion, of the deficient alkaline phosphates.

Liebig, who previously had stoutly denied the presence of lactic acid in the gastric juice, now admits its existence on the faith of Lehman's experiments, and observes, "and thus the problem of the digestive process in the stomach would appear, in its chemical aspect, to be completely solved!"—(p. 138.)

In conclusion, the distinguished author desires distinctly to state that he is far from considering the researches contained in the present work, as complete; they are, on the contrary, the first steps in a new career; and indicate alone the path to be hereafter pursued by chemists. The subject is only opened, much less exhausted; many obscure points are still to be elucidated; and various substances are yet to be distinguished in the muscular tissues alone.

Independent of valuable positive results, the character and tone of the work are, as the reader will perceive from the analysis we have attempted, eminently philosophical, with the single exception before alluded to,—an extreme acerbity in the controversial portions.

M. C.

ART. XXIII.—*On the Causes and Treatment of Abortion and Sterility: Being the result of an extended practical inquiry into the Physiological and Morbid conditions of the Uterus, with reference especially to Leucorrhæal affections and the Diseases of Menstruation.* By JAMES WHITEHEAD, F. R. C. S., Surgeon to the Manchester and Salford Lying-in Hospital. *Και γὰρ ἔγχευ, ἐπικουρὸς εἶναι, . . . ἦκον . . . ' Ἄλλ' ἄγε δὴ καὶ νῦν μεδάμεθα θύριδος ἀλκῆς.* Hom. *Il.*, Lib. v. Quidquid valde utile sit, id fieri honestum, etiam si antea non videretur.—Cic. *de Offi.*, Lib. iii. 8vo. pp. 368. Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard.

THE work of Mr. Whitehead presents a very clear and satisfactory account of the physiology, hygiene, and morbid affections of the uterus, in a plain unaffected style. The observations of the author are evidently the result of extensive personal researches carefully conducted, and, under circumstances particularly well adapted for the acquisition of correct views in reference to the class of uterine diseases, to which the volume more particularly refers. The pathology and treatment of these diseases, are illustrated by a series of cases, which have been studiously divested, so far as is consistent with the entireness of the leading phenomena, of all prolix particulars, such as daily reports respecting the character of the pulse, appearance of the tongue, the state of the secretions, &c., which usually render cases so tedious in the perusal. No general rules are presented in respect to the treatment of the affections described, for the simple reason, the author remarks, that much remains still to be done in this branch of practice, and also, because he believes sufficient to be said on that subject, in connection with the illustrative cases.

The first four chapters are devoted to the physiology of menstruation and the diseases of this function. The author considers in detail the signs and the age of puberty, the conditions which principally influence menstruation at its commencement; the properties of the menstrual fluid; the surface by which it is secreted, and the age at which menstruation finally ceases; the influence of climate and employment in influencing the development of puberty, and the influence of temperament and habit of body, in determining the character of disease in difficult menstruation, embracing some interesting remarks upon the scrofulous diathesis.

The diseases of menstruation are considered under the heads of retention and suppression of the menses, difficult menstruation, and vicarious and metrorrhagic menstruation. The diseases of the last menstrual crisis treated of by Mr. Whitehead, are purulent leucorrhæa, uterine hæmorrhage, endo-uteritis, uterine phlebitis, cauliflower disease of the cervix uteri, with malignant degeneration of the uterine appendages, and finally corroding ulcer of the uterus.

The fifth chapter treats of the signs of pregnancy, and the four succeeding chapters are devoted to the subject of abortion. In this latter connection, we have some interesting remarks on the actual duration of the child bearing period; and the

period of pregnancy at which abortion most frequently occurs. As causes of abortion, the author enumerates, first, circumstances unconnected with disease of the uterus, placenta prævia and functional impediment of the bowels, retroversion of the uterus and congestion of the uterine circulation; and secondly, abortion associated with certain morbid states of the uterus. The tenth and last chapter treats of sterility.

Many of the facts recorded in the volume before us, are in a great measure new, this is particularly true in reference to the observations of the author in reference to some of the phenomena of menstruation, especially the nature, properties, and source of the menstrual fluid, whether normal or spurious; the physiological and pathological changes observed in the lower part of the uterus during pregnancy, and the curative means to be adopted for the removal of the latter; and also many of the facts detailed by Mr. Whitehead, in reference to the peculiar action of the syphilitic poison upon the uterus, and its transmissibility to the offspring after having been for a long period latently existing in the maternal system.

The entire treatise is replete with valuable materials for the elucidation of the pathology and effects of the more frequent diseases of the uterus, a class of diseases of very common occurrence, and productive often, if not of severe suffering, at least, of great discomfort to the patient; always impairing her health, and occasionally endangering her life, by occasioning repeated abortions or gradually producing a serious morbid alteration of the tissues of the uterus; unfortunately, however, the frequency of their occurrence, their true character, and their symptomatology and treatment have been but little attended to by the profession generally. As very properly remarked by our author, the investigation of uterine pathology has always been looked upon as fraught with peculiar difficulty; as involving the necessity of a procedure to which insuperable objections are likely to be raised. It is needless to remark how entirely this allegation is fanciful and unfounded. In ninety-and-nine out of every hundred cases in which there is reasonable grounds for suspecting the existence of uterine disease, interfering as it does with every comfort, and spoiling every enjoyment of life, any perplexity that may arise merely against the mode of administering to the relief of the malady, cannot, and does not originate with the sufferer.

As a specimen of the author's manner of treating of the diseases of the uterus, we present his remarks on *endo-uteritis*.

"This form of disease is one of a strictly local character, of every day occurrence, and very amenable to treatment. It nevertheless acts as a common cause of abortion during the early months of pregnancy; and it constitutes, in the majority of instances, the pathology of that species of disordered or difficult menstruation known as dysmenorrhœa. It does not occur as a necessary consequence, however, that dysmenorrhœa, as commonly witnessed in early life, indicates the existence of a condition likely to create an inaptitude for child-bearing afterwards; on the contrary, the symptoms in the virgin are often of a purely nervous, or what is understood in common parlance, of an hysterical character, unaccompanied with inflammatory action, and they frequently undergo complete cure by marriage.

"Endo-uteritis is a term employed to signify inflammation of the lining membrane of the uterus. The affection sometimes implicates the cavity of the cervix, or that of the lower part of the organ only; at other times, the whole lining membrane is involved, and it not unfrequently extends within the Fallopian canals to their outer extremities. The inflammation is generally of a chronic, although of a very irritable character; and under certain states of excitement, as febrile irritation, resulting from the application of cold, or of accidental violence; inordinate venereal indulgence; the action of the gonorrhœal or syphilitic virus, &c.; the deeper textures of the uterus and neighbouring organs may be seriously implicated.

"Its anatomical characters are similar to those of the mucous tissues, under like circumstances. It rarely exists, perhaps, in a sufficient degree of severity to occasion a fatal issue, uncomplicated with other disease; but it is frequently noticed as a concomitant condition of general *metritis*, uterine *phlebitis*, inflammation of the uterine lymphatics, *metropertontitis*, gangrenous inflammation, *ramollissement*, disease of the Fallopian tubes, or of the ovaries, and the various forms of fatal puerperal and other similar affections.

"The symptoms of endo-uteritis are, distention of the hypogastrium, accompanied

with a constant, deep-seated aching behind the pubis; irritable bladder; pain of the loins, or of the inguinal regions, and of one or both sides of the abdomen on a level with the umbilicus; languor; irritative fever; and vaginal discharge. The whole uterus is often found in a state of inflammatory hypertrophy, and extremely painful upon pressure. Especially at the *back part of its body*, where it impinges upon the rectum. The cervix is hard and less sensitive, but slight succussion made upon this part, develops a painful sensation about the inguinal or umbilical region, or across the loins. Examined with the speculum, the labia present a tense, glistening appearance, and a ring of vivid redness surrounds the orifice; this, in some cases, is seen to extend upon the surface of the *posterior lip*. Sometimes one or both labia are excoriated, eroded, or fissured.

"Endo-uteritis is occasionally met with in a much less painful form than the preceding; the organ being free from tenderness upon pressure, the constitutional disturbances less acute, and the symptoms are altogether of a milder character. The discharge, however, is equally profuse, and possesses the same sensible properties; the labia are softer, sometimes flabby, their opposing surfaces, which generally remain in contact, or nearly so, presenting a wavy or fringed appearance, with sharp margins, turned slightly inwards, and having a bright red, granular aspect. The first or more acute form of the complaint is met with during the first months of pregnancy, or immediately before or after menstruation, when the disease attacks the unimpregnated; the latter supervenes upon the former, and is generally seen a week or two after the occurrence of abortion, or after delivery, in cases where the process has attained the full period.

"Accumulation of air within the uterus, is a condition frequently accompanying inflammation of its lining membrane. It is commonly discharged in the form of bubbles, which may often be seen to form and burst in rapid succession during specular inquiry. There is reason to believe that it sometimes collects in considerable quantity, causing great suffering, by distention of the uterine walls, and being expelled by sudden contraction of the organ, accompanied with severe forcing pains like those of labour. Generally speaking, it emits an offensive odour, owing in most instances, probably, to decomposition of the small coagula liable to be retained after menstruation, or which may also be thrown out at other times. It may possibly be, on some occasions, the product of secretion.

"Endo-uteritis is generally first noticed during pregnancy, coming on after exposure to cold, or as a consequence of fatigue, violent efforts, luxurious living, anxiety, sexual indulgence, and the like. It is sometimes the result of abortion, induced by accidental violence, or of difficult labours, especially such as necessitate instrumental interference, and of imprudent practices during the puerperal period. It sometimes manifests itself at the time corresponding to the next monthly period after conception has taken place, the usual premonitory symptoms of menstruation being developed, but unaccompanied by catamenial discharge. If leucorrhœa have previously existed, this secretion becomes for the time, augmented, and may continue in undiminished quantity afterwards. Severe aching of the loins and hypogastrium is experienced, accompanied with rigors, irritative fever, loss of rest, &c., and at some indefinite period subsequently, on the application of an exciting cause, perhaps of a very trivial nature, hemorrhage comes on, and the process is at once determined. It is not always that pregnancy is suspected to exist under these circumstances; the escape of clots of blood and of mole growths, being looked upon as the result of disordered or deferred menstruation, are consequently seldom submitted to examination; the phenomena are often allowed to be repeated at intervals, for years, the case being regarded as irremediable, or not suited for ordinary medical experience. The ovum thus early thrown off, exhibits itself in the state of what is commonly called the apoplectic mole, retaining still its isolated condition; its implantation upon the decidual surface having been prevented by the diseased condition of the newly formed structure. When expulsion takes place during the third month of pregnancy, the ovum is generally detached with its envelopes entire; and the unshapely mass which the product thus exhibits, constitutes what is vulgarly denominated a 'false conception.' In the latter, as in the preceding case, abortion is caused by any inflamed state of the inner surface of the uterus, resulting in an imperfectly organized condition of that portion of the decidual membrane which is contiguously situated Utero-gestation,

however, may be continued to its full term, although the inner surface of the uterus remain in a state of chronic inflammation the whole time; but the process is accompanied with great suffering, and likely to be frequently endangered. The decidua membrane is generally found greatly thickened, tufted, vascular, and not unfrequently exhibits appearances of recent inflammatory action, and the placenta is interspersed with fibrinous deposits.

"The treatment consists in local or general bleeding, regulated according to the strength of the patient, and the urgency of the symptoms; in the exhibition of alterative and soothing medicines; and in injections within the uterus, when unimpregnated."

We recommend the work of Mr. Whitehead to all who may desire to study the observations of a cautious, experienced, and candid practitioner, in reference to a class of ailments, which will be presented to the notice of every one engaged in extensive practice almost daily, and which will demand close attention to determine their proper character, and a judicious application of appropriate remedies, to arrest their progress and effect their entire removal.

D. F. C.

ART. XXIV.—*On Poisons in relation to Medical Jurisprudence and Medicine.* By ALFRED S. TAYLOR, F. R. S., Lecturer on Medical Jur. and Chem., in Guy's Hospital, &c. Edited, with notes and additions, by R. Eglesfeld Griffith, M. D., &c. pp. 687. 8vo. Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1848.

THIS amplification of the treatise on toxicology contained in the author's manual of medical jurisprudence, was called for by the rapid advances of science, the great increase of the crime of poisoning, and the necessity of "collecting and arranging in a convenient form for reference, those important medical facts in relation to death from poison," which must form the basis upon which the proper administration of justice in such cases is to be founded.

During the three years which have elapsed since the former publication alluded to above, much has been done in medical jurisprudence, and the work before us bears ample evidence of the author's assiduity in collecting cases bearing upon toxicology, and of his thorough knowledge of the whole subject, both in its medical and legal aspects, and as affected by advances in science or by recent judicial decisions. The American editor—whose additions are valuable—has, in a few words, given the characteristics of Mr. Taylor's work. "It is an elaborate epitome of all that is known on the subject of the poisons, and is amply illustrated with cases, so as to exemplify the relative value attached by juries to the various symptoms induced by the respective articles, and also of the modes of detecting these articles as given by the best authorities."

C. R. K.

ART. XXV.—*Bericht des Gesundheitsrathes an die hohe Regierung des Kantons Zürich über des Medicinalwesen des Kantons im Jahr. 1846.* 8vo. pp. 107. Zürich: 1847. Report of the Council of Health to the Supreme Government of the Canton of Zurich, in relation to the medical affairs of the Canton during the year 1846.

THIS very instructive report embraces, first, an account of the prevailing diseases—endemic, epidemic, and sporadic—remarks on the effects of particular remedies, drawn from the experience of the leading physicians of the canton, notices of the more important surgical cases, puerperal affections, and diseases of children; and a few interesting toxicological observations. The second part embraces a view of the affairs of the several medical institutions of the canton, of the policlinic, and of the prisons of the canton, in a medical point of view. The third part presents a general notice of the official acts of the council of Health, in reference to apothecaries, midwives, forensic and military medicine, instruction, and veterinary medicine. This part comprises a table of births, report on vaccinations and